

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /070 W
-----102800 241650Z /64

O R 241548Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 999
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1458

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, IS, JO
SUBJ: FREIJ GETS SATISFACTION, SO DOES SHEHADEH

REF: JERUSALEM 1449

1. BETHLEHEM MAYOR ELIAS FREIJ TOLD POLOFF THAT A DELEGATION
OF HIGH-RANKING ISRAELI OFFICERS CALLED ON HIM MAY 24 TO
REASSURE HIM THAT ABSENTEE OWNERS OF PROPERTY ON THE WEST
BANK WOULD NO LONGER FACE DIFFICULTIES IN CONDUCTING BUSINESS
RELATED TO THAT PROPERTY. (REFTEL) BUSINESS, PREVIOUSLY
BLOCKED, WAS CONDUCTED AS NORMAL WITH THE CUSTODIAN OF
ABSENTEE PROPERTY MAY 24, FREIJ ADDED.

2. THE ISRAELI DELEGATION INCLUDED THE COORDINATOR
OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (GENERAL AVRAHAM ORLY), THE WEST BANK
MILGOV (BRIG GEN BEN ELIEZER), AND THE ARAB AFFAIRS ADVISOR
(MENACHEM MILSON). ORLY COMPLAINED TO FREIJ THAT THE MAYOR
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SHOULD NOT HAVE HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE SUBJECT,
BUT RATHER CONTACTED HIS TEL AVIV OFFICE DIRECTLY. FREIJ COUNTERED
THAT COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE MAYORS AND THE HIGHEST LEVELS
OF THE MOD HAD BEEN BLOCKED FOR MANY MONTHS, I.E. SINCE THE
ARRIVAL OF MILSON. FREIJ CLAIMED THAT ORLY THEN REBUKED MILSON
AND BOTH ISRAELIS GAVE HIM THEIR PHONE NUMBERS FOR FUTURE
REFERENCE.

3. FREIJ TOLD POLOFF HE BELIEVED SITUATION REGARDING ABSENTEE PROPERTY HAD RETURNED TO THE STATUS QUO ANTE THROUGHOUT

THE WEST BANK. HE WAS CLEARLY PLEASED WITH HIS OWN PERFORMANCE AS THE ONLY MAYOR WHO HAD SPOKEN UP. IT SEEMED ISRAELI JOURNALISTS WERE NOW COMPETING WITH EACH OTHER TO COVER WEST BANK STORIES, FREIJ NOTED, AND THAT DEFENSE OFFICIALS WERE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO THEIR REPORTS.

4. RAMALLAH LAWYER AZIZ SHIHEDEH TOLD POLOFF MAY 24 THAT CUSTODIAN OF ABSENTEE PROPERTY FOR THE WEST BANK HAD INFORMED HIM SAME DAY THAT SITUATION WOULD REVERT TO STATUS QUO ANTE AND THAT HE WOULD APPROVE SHIHEDEH'S PENDING TRANSACTION, INVOLVING AN ABSENTEE, FOLLOWING DAY. SHIHEDEH EXPRESSED SATISFACTION TO POLOFF THAT NEW MEASURES HAD BEEN "SHELVED," BUT ALSO CAUTIONED THAT QUESTION MIGHT BE RAISED AGAIN.
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Message Attributes

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